

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 083330
ORIGIN COME-00

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STATE/EB/OT/STA/GWHITE
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STR/HLAWRENCE

-----141020Z 064845 /23-12

R 132304Z APR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

UNCLAS STATE 083330

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EIND, BDIS, FR

SUBJECT:STANDARDS FOR SILVERPLATED FLATWARE AND HOLLOWARE

1. A U.S. MANUFACTURER, INTERNATIONAL SILVER COMPANY (INSILCO) MERIDEN CONNECTICUT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FRENCH JEWELERS AND SILVERSMITHS MAY PROPOSE TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT NEW AND STRINGENT STANDARDS FOR SILVER PLATED FLATWARE AND HOLLOWARE PRODUCTS. ACCORDING TO INSILCO, THE PROPOSED ELECTROPLATE DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE 10 MICRONS AND 33 MICRONS RESPECTIVELY, FOR HOLLOWARE AND FLATWARE PRODUCTS, IN ORDER TO BE SOLD AS "SILVERPLATED" IN FRANCE. SHOULD THE GOF ADOPT THESE STANDARDS, INSILCO FEELS ITS PRODUCTS, WHICH ARE RELATIVELY LOW END QUALITY AND PRICE, WOULD BE DISADVANTAGED COMPETITIVELY. REPORTEDLY, LOW END QUALITY AND LOW PRICE PRODUCTS

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COULD BE MARKETING AS "WHITE METAL" UNDER THE PROPOSAL. FYI U.S. HAS NO OFFICIAL CIVILIAN STANDARDS (DOD HAS ITS OWN STANDARDS) REGARDING MICRON THICKNESS OF ELECTROPLATE DEPOSITS FOR SILVERPLATE. MANUFACTURERS REPUTATION, PRICES AND CONSUMER PREFERENCE ARE FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER CHOICES. ACCORDING TO THE MANUFACTURING JEWELERS AND SILVERSMITHS ASSOCIATION "WHITE METAL" WOULD CONNOTE AN IN-

FERIOR PRODUCT, REGARDLESS OF ITS DURABILITY. END FYI

2. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH GOF OFFICIALS AND BRING TO THEIR ATTENTION OUR CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF SUCH AN UNDULY HIGH STANDARD WHICH WOULD IN PRACTICE PREVENT THE SALE IN FRANCE OF LESS EXPENSIVE U.S. MADE SILVERPLATE. WE RECOGNIZE FRENCH CONCERN TO PROTECT CONSUMERS, HOWEVER WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE METHODS FOR INFORMING CONSUMERS REGARDING THE QUALITY OF PRODUCTS WHICH WOULD NOT ERECT A TRADE BARRIER. ONE SUCH METHOD COULD BE FOR THE MANUFACTURERS THEMSELVES TO VOLUNTARILY INFORM CONSUMERS. THIS WOULD INFORM CONSUMERS WITHOUT RESTRICTING PRODUCT AVAILABILITY.

3. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO CONTACT INTERNATIONAL SILVER-EUROPE, MR. PHILIP DE CHABERT AT 6 RUE DE LA BERMI PARIS, TELEPHONE 225 961 TO DISCUSS INSILCO'S COMPLAINT. COPIES OF PERTINENT BACKGROUND MATERIAL ARE AVAILABLE FROM DE CHABERT AND ARE BEING AIR-POUCHED TO THE EMBASSY-ATTENTION STANDARDS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STANDARDS, SILVER, BUSINESS FIRMS, IMPORT CONTROLS, ALLEGATIONS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
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Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: BIEPR/OTP/IND/RMITCHELL
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TAGS: ETRD, EIND, BDIS, FR, US, INTL SILVER CO
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